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Development and Validation of Scale for Assessment of Followership among School Teachers

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The teaching profession in the researcher's context is becoming a machine-like job because teachers' followership i.e. competence, commitment, courage, and self-management, is least prioritized, and more focus is given only on their regularity and punctuality. Effective followership is desired among the teachers for the achievement of educational goals but ignored and resultantly, there is no scale on teachers' followership. Moreover, the followership measures particularly for teachers in the research literature are rare and the available measures lack recommended psychometric evidence. Therefore, the effort to develop a followership scale for teachers (FST) has been made. Through literature review, 55 items were constructed. Five items were discarded from the item pool having poor Content Validity Ratio i.e. below 0.42 that is estimated through the judgment of 14 experts. The items were administered using google form in the what's app groups of teachers and 346 school teachers working in high schools have responded. Exploratory factor analysis using varimax rotation and confirmatory factor analysis on AMOS-21 was performed for construct validation of the scale. The scale was finalized containing 16 items with no item representing less than 0.40 load. Sub-scales of followership indicate moderate correlation and the overall Cronbach alpha of the scale was estimated at 0.88. Finally, FST includes four subscales i.e. (a) Competence, (b) Commitment, (c) Courage, and (d) Self-management. The scale containing recommended psychometric properties is available for use.

Keywords: followership, competence, commitment, courage, self-management, factor analysis, model fit indices

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INTRODUCTION

Teachers are a fundamental factor of quality in the educational process (Luján, 2021). One of the major contributors to educational progress is the teachers having effective followership. According to Kelley (1992), effective followers have a high level of competence, commitment to achieve organizational goals, courage, and self-management. Moreover, these factors contribute approximately 80% of the success of an organization. However, in the educational context of the researcher, more focus is placed on academic qualification and attendance of the teachers at the time of recruitment and after appointment, respectively. Its possible reason seems the least focus on followership and lack of valid measures of effective followership among the teachers. Therefore, the researcher made an effort to develop a scale to estimate followership among schoolteachers.

Teacher efficacy was associated with teachers' internal attributions of their teaching effectiveness (Fu, Y., & Wang, 2021) e.g. professional support and commitment (Khun-inkeeree et al., 2021) which are under the scope of followership. However, the followership concept is understudied due to the placement of more attention on a leadership role in organizational setup (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). Similarly, Avolio and Reichard (2008) highlighted the traditional leadership theories ignoring the significance of effective followership. The reason behind the issue is highlighted in the views of Bjugstad et al., (2006) and Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) that the followership is least addressed due to more focus of the academicians on leadership effectiveness. However, Williams (2008) believes followership and leadership as two sides of a coin, and Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) consider effective followership necessary for effective leadership.

Researchers nominated followers based on their level of followership in a variety of ways. They assessed them based on certain characteristics and then identify the followership styles based on the obtained scores of the respondents. The work of Kelley (1992) is basic and considered one of the important works to identify followership styles based on four effective followership characteristics. At first, effective followers, according to Kelley (1992) are excellent in self-management because they need the least supervision while working. Secondly, they concentrate on organizational goals with commitment. Thirdly, competence in their work can be observed as they are masters of professional skills. Fourthly, they present courage in their actions through their questions or support to the leader in decision-making.

Kelley (1992) used the four characteristics of effective subordinates to develop the most cited questionnaire. Further, Kelley distributed the followership styles based on obtained scores and named these styles as, "alienated, passive, pragmatist, conformist, and exemplary. These followership styles are further based on a combination of two different followership dimensions: engagement and critical thinking (Kelley, 1992). Based on Kelley's (1992) followership model, followers' effectiveness is theorized to vary depending upon the style of followership that employees assume within an organization. Critical thinking ranges between dependent uncritical thinking and independent critical thinking (Kelley, 2008). Dependent thinkers according to Latour

and Rast (2004) accept information that is provided to them without any evaluation or questioning. Moreover, independent critical thinkers do not accept information without questioning; rather, they evaluate and analyze information to identify consequences and opportunities.

Kelley's contribution to the followership research is very important because he provided a sound base for the researchers of all fields who are focusing to investigate antecedents of effective institutional or organizational success (Jaussi et al., 2008). Moreover, Kelley's work is most cited in the followership-related studies of all fields (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). However, there is still a lack of valid measures to estimate the followership of individuals. Kelley's theoretical unpinning of effective followership is logical, however, the questionnaire lacks modern-day psychometric evidence. Kelley's questionnaire is based on two dimensions i.e. critical thinking and active engagement (Kelley, 2008), therefore advanced psychometric evidence of unidimensionality using confirmatory factor analysis on the complete questionnaire is impossible. So, the scale developer provided a measure for estimating followership among school teachers particularly, as the field of the researcher in education.

Literature Review

Followership, in general, is considered a negative characteristic if someone talks about having the followership of a senior in the workplace. The followership is considered a religious type word and people respond in a non-normal way after listening to the term. However, Kelley (1992) provides a unique definition of followership that modifies followership status positively. The contribution of followers to organizational success is highly significant, as Chaleff (2016) claims that followers' and leaders' collaborative work is essential for achieving the common institutional purpose. Moreover, effective followers never remain bound to the instruction of leaders, but they do the effort for organizational purposes. As Dixon and Westbrook (2003) highlight that a crucial aspect of organizational success is the development of social contracts through leader-follower relationships. Both are critical to pursuing a common purpose and both should be considered accountable for unsuccessful situations in an organization.

Role-Based Approaches and Constructionist Approaches

According to Oc and Bashshur (2013) and Uhl-Bien et al., (2014), assessment approaches to followership are role-based and constructionist. The role-based approach views the followers through typological models. Therefore, supporters of the role-based approach categorize followers based on their active engagement and/or independent thinking. Moreover, the role-based approach observes the influence of followers on the performance of leaders in terms of support specifically (Bjugstad et al., 2006).

Uhl-Bien et al., (2014) in a review article discussed the role-based approach that decodes followership styles into passive, conformist, exemplary, dominant, interactive, etc. Moreover, they described the effective follower's behaviors as obedient, motivated, actively engaged, honest, brave/courageous, and accountable. Motivation as a followership characteristic includes their level of interest in the job and the effort they apply to achieve the goals of the organization (Smith, Wagaman, & Handley, 2009).

Active engagement is another characteristic of effective followership which involves the expression of active physical, cognitive, and emotional involvement in work (Carsten, et al., 2010). Particularly, effective followership behavior can be conceptualized through the observance of ways that employees use to improve the existing circumstance or develop new ones (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010).

Second, the constructionist approach observes followership similar to a social process where followership is considered as behavior that co-creates effective leaders and followers are produced in response to them (Oc & Bashshur, 2013). About this approach, Uhl-Bien et al., (2014) describe followership as a characteristic, actions/behaviors, and process in response to the leader. The conceptual discussion infers that the role-based approach seems more feasible in a workplace environment where the leaders are ranked high as compared to their followers. Followers are also subordinates in positions to their leaders. Whereas, the constructionist approach to followership explains followership generally outside of workplace conditions such as in a social setting. In a social place, no one is senior or junior to others but the leaders are produced through social interactions of the people. People use to decide through an undocumented or planned common agreement and then, they become followers of the decided leader.

While discussing influential factors of followership, researchers found followership styles ranging from most effective to least effective. Among the researchers, Kelley's (1992) work is frequently cited. Leadership-related research works are still focusing least on the importance of followership as Kohles et al., (2012) claims about the false belief of researchers that they place more importance on leadership in organizational success as compared to followership. However, the detail of the followership model of Kelley is described below.

Kelley's Followership Styles

Kelley (1992) explored five styles of followership based on their active engagement and critical thinking skill. The explanation of the followership styles with the indicators is provided below.

Exemplary Followership

Exemplary followers as the name shows are the best amongst the followers. They are ranked at the highest place in active engagement and critical/independent thinking. Kelley (1992) claims that they depend on their thinking instead of depending on their leader's thought and stay active even in the absence of leaders or supervisors. They do not need any supervisor to work effectively. However, they support the leader in making the decision and achieving organizational goals. They assume themselves responsible for their official job requirements (Blanchard et al., 2009). Bjugstad et al., (2006) highlighted them as the most cooperative and collaborative employees in the organization for their colleagues. The next after the exemplary followers are conformists and the description of these followers is given below.

Conformist Followers

Conformist followers are at second number in terms of their hierarchal position as effective followers. They depend on the thoughts of their leaders that represent their dependent thinking. Moreover, they obey the orders of the leaders as they convey and once they are given instruction, they totally follow it and work accordingly (Kelley, 1992). Therefore, Kelley (2008) nominated them as 'yes people' type employees or subordinates, as Bjugstad et al., (2006) also exemplify them as followers of the order instead of asking any questioning to the leader. Conformist followers are the opposite of alienated followers, however, the detail of alienated followers is at the last in the portion of followership styles.

Pragmatic Followers

After the conformist followers, pragmatic followers are the most effective followers. They moderately remain busy in work and show a somewhat level of independent thinking towards the decision of the leader (Kelley, 1992). They lack proper commitment and self-regulation in reality because they work effectively only when they feel their status is rated as low (Kelley, 2008). Pragmatic followers can question the leader in case of wrong decisions but they ask the questions only when the decision is related to their work (Kelley, 1992). It can be inferred that they only work in very necessary conditions such as when the organizational setup faces some disastrous situations.

Passive Followership

Passive followers are ranked after the moderates/pragmatists because they are at the lowest level in independent thinking. They rely on the thinking of the leader and follow the orders from seniors unquestioningly (Kelley, 1992). Kelly in his later work nominated them as sheep (Kelly, 2008) because they obey the leaders or accept every type of work unquestioningly (Bjugstad et al., 2006). Moreover, passive followers need consistent guidance to complete even the easiest tasks and they need the orders of the leader to start anything new even which is necessary (Latour & Rast, 2004). However, this type of follower is acceptable and adjustable in some particular situations where the job requirements are labor work type, but, in a profession like teaching, passive followers are intolerable.

Alienated Followership

The most disregarded or rated at the lowest rank is the alienated followers. They have high independent thinking but use it to challenge the leaders in their righteous decisions (Kelley, 1992; Kelley, 2008). Alienated followers are at the lowest level in active engagement because they think, in their current profession, their colleagues and seniors are not providing the proper care, and hence, they always plan to quit their current job (Kelley, 2008). Similarly, Kelley (1992) argues that the alienated followers think of themselves as the devil's advocates, therefore, they like to oppose the managers.

All the followership styles explored by Kelley (1992) seem universal because of their logical explanation through indicators and their observance in all professions. The need is to focus on a unidimensional scale because of their valid and accurate identification as Kellerman (2008) provided a followership model focusing on one dimension only. The following theoretical framework illustrates that effective followership has two common approaches to assessment, the first is through characteristics and the second is through categorizing the followers through their level of effectiveness. Both are important in their place, however, to develop a scale to identify followership styles or level of followership characteristics, scale developer has focused on four major characteristics and then ranked them to identify the followership styles by making cut points of total scale score that is explained in the last part of this paper.

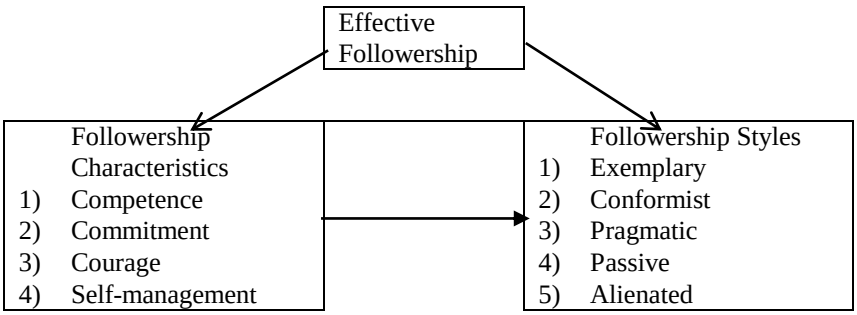

Figure 1
Theoretical framework

Kelley's (1992) questionnaire contains 20 items based on a seven-point numerical Likert scale representing always to never as a practice. The scale is based on independent/dependent thinking and active/passive engagement of the followers (Beebe, 2013). The questionnaire is even used in some latest researches to find out followership styles relationship with different variables such as Blanchard et al. (2009) explored followership style relationship with the attachment of employees, Oyertunji (2013) explored followership style relationship with job performance, Hinić et al., (2017) explored followership style relationship with job satisfaction. Although the followership questionnaire of Kelley is frequently used in research, its validation and reliability estimates still require clarification (Ligon et al., 2019). Therefore, the researcher made effort to develop the scale for measuring followership among the schoolteachers through modern psychometric techniques using AMOS-21. The procedures applied by the researcher to develop this scale are explained below hierarchically.

METHOD

Item Pooling

Fifty-five items were constructed for the initial item pool by reviewing the literature on characteristics of effective followership. Kline (2005) claims that three items on each construct are enough, therefore, 55 items on four characteristics of followership seems

an excellent number of items in the pool. Moreover, Linn (2008) suggests developing a double number of items than the desired ones for the development of scale.

Content validity of FST

The establishment of the face and content validity is a preferable step before pilot testing the instruments. Therefore, a group of 14 experts was requested to provide judgment on language suitability for the school teachers and particularly the relevancy of the items to the characteristics of effective followership. Moreover, the experts were requested to provide their judgment on Lawshe's (1975) three-point scale i.e. essential, necessary, and unnecessary. Based on expert opinion, 05 items were eliminated from the initial item pool either due to low CVR or issues of concept repetition, irrelevant ideas, confusing statements, etc. The content validity ratio of the items and content validity index of the finalized scale is presented in the following table 1.

Table 1
Content validity estimates

Item No.	CVR	Item No.	CVR	Item No.	CVR	Item No.	CVR
1	0.86	5	0.71	9	1.00	13	0.57
2	0.71	6	0.86	10	0.86	14	0.86
3	0.71	7	0.57	11	0.86	15	0.86
4	1.00	8	0.86	12	0.71	16	0.71
CVI= 0.79							

Construct Validity of FST

Retained 50 items through expert opinion were administered and 346 school teachers have responded to the request. The questionnaire was assembled on google-form and surveyed in different whats app groups of teachers. The sample included 191 (55%) male and 155 (45%) female school teachers serving in high schools. These 346 teachers include 159 (46%) senior high school teachers, 66 (19%) elementary school teachers, and 121 (35%) primary school teachers. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was initially applied using varimax rotation to estimate the number convergence of items under four factors as per the theory of Kelley (1992).

The items loaded under the four factors were then processed through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in Amos-21. Carpenter (2018) suggested the use of EFA and CFA to assess the association of variables to its relevant factor. Moreover, DeVellis (2012) suggest using theory, scree test, and parallel analysis for factorization in scale development. Table 2 presents the measures taken for scale development as suggested by experts. Moreover, Tabachnick & Fidell, (2013) recommended the use of varimax rotation for EFA.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's test was employed to assess sampling adequacy and significance level to move forward for further statistical operations. The value of KMO is estimated at .860 which is greater than the minimum value of .60 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Similarly, the value of Bartlett's test is significant (0.000 < 0.05) that allows the researcher to proceed further.

Scree Test

The cutoff line in the graph obtained through the scree test determines the number of factors in the data (Preacher & MacCallum, 2002). A four-factor solution from the plot is vibrant. However, experts criticize scree test due to facilitation in making subjective judgments and recommend parallel analysis as an authentic measure.

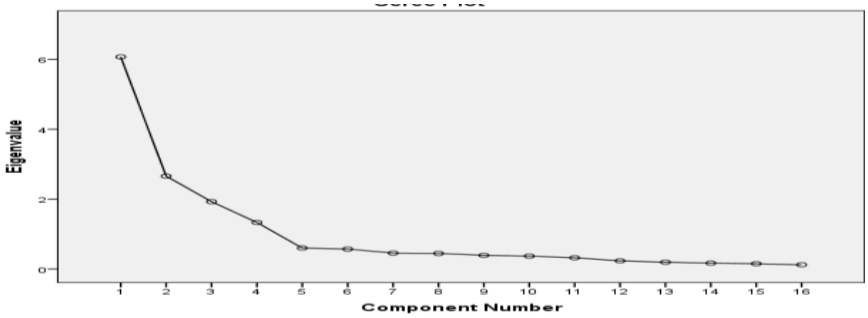

Figure 2
Scree plot presenting four factor solution

Total Variance Explained and Parallel Analysis

Parallel analysis is more robust than the scree test as it compares originally generated component eigenvalues with randomly generated eigenvalues. A component is accepted if its real eigenvalue is greater than the randomly generated eigenvalue and reject in case of opposition to this situation (Kline, 2013). The following table 2 shows that the four components are accepted as their real eigenvalues are greater than randomly generated eigenvalues. However, the fifth component is rejected due to having high randomized eigenvalue than the real eigenvalue. Moreover, reaching a status of 75% is important for retaining the factors through observing total variance explain (Pett, Lackey, & Sullivan, 2003).

Table 2
Parallel Analysis Test

Sr#	Component Eigen Value	Random Eigen Values	Decision	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.069	1.3909	Accepted	37.932	37.932
2	2.658	1.3139	Accepted	16.611	54.542
3	1.926	1.2513	Accepted	12.038	66.580
4	1.331	1.1935	Accepted	8.319	74.899
5	.599	1.1498	Rejected		

16 variables, 346 respondents, and 25 iterations

Rotated Component Matrix

The following table 3 presents the rotated component matrix. Varimax rotation is applied because this is most preferably used by the scale developers in orthogonal rotation (Dimitrov, 2012). After all, it provides ease of interpretation (DeVellis, 2012). The procedure was conducted without suppressing values to provide evidence for the nature cross-loadings of each item. Table 3 shows that there is no cross-loading with a difference of less than 0.10. Hence, the rotated components matrix item loadings qualify the recommendation of Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) that the item should be deleted in case of having a cross-loadings difference of less than 0.10 as compared to its highest loading on a component.

Table 3
Rotated component matrix of FST

Item No.	Components			
	1	2	3	4
CPT2	.859	.155	.168	.186
CPT3	.848	-.021	.119	.077
CPT5	.896	.014	.137	.178
CPT6	.873	.141	.101	.210
CPT9	.735	.130	.138	.157
CMT4	.190	.754	.127	.084
CMT8	.054	.894	.163	.152
CMT9	.076	.866	.160	.096
CMT11	.009	.748	.180	.069
CRG3	.165	.161	.845	.015
CRG5	.301	.204	.815	.097
CRG6	.293	.272	.771	.043
CRG9	-.047	.100	.833	.063
SM7	.143	.034	.128	.781
SM8	.285	.161	.064	.842
SM10	.186	.175	-.031	.830

FST AMOS Graphic

Owing to the finding in the above table, the following measurement model has been constructed using AMOS-21 to confirm the internal factor structure more critically. The model presents 16 items and 4 components.

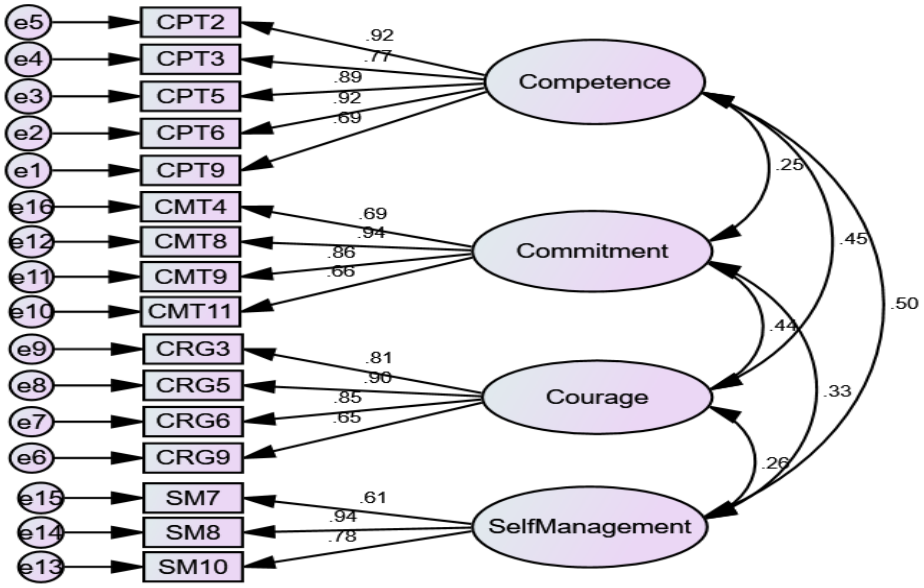

Figure-3
Followership measurement model

Abbreviations of competence, courage, self-management, and commitment are CPT, CRG, SM, and CMT respectively. The model shows four factors each linked with sufficient indicators, as Kline (2013) recommended criteria of minimum 03 indicators to measure a construct. Similarly, the moderate correlations among the factors indicate their unidimensionality and absence of multicollinearity. Eigenvalues are considered critical in choosing the most suitable indicators and each of the indicators shows an eigenvalue of more than 0.40 which is above the suggested cut-off value by Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt (2010). The next step after observing the AMOS graphic for the scale is to check the model fit indices.

Model Fit indices

McDonald and Hu (2002) consider CFI, GFI, NNFI, and NFI important to report, whereas Kline (2013) prefers SRMR, RMSEA, and CFI. Moreover, Basak, Ekmekci, Bayram, and Bas (2013) include RMR, GFI, AGFIA, NFI, and CFI as major model fit indices. However, Hu and Bentler (1999) warn users that these values are not rigid standards. The researcher considered CMIN/df, RMR, GFI, AGFI, NFI, CFI, SRMR, and RMSEA as indicators for acceptable Model fit. All the values of Goodness of fit indicators i.e. CMIN/df, RMR, GFI, AGFI, NFI, and CFI, and badness of fit i.e. SRMR and RMSEA are acceptable as per recommendations of experts.

Table 4
Goodness and badness model fit indices of the followership scale

Sr.#	Indicators	Estimates	Cut off Value	Reference	Judgment
1	CMIN /df	2.663	0< CMIN /df <3	Hair et al. (2010)	Accepted
2	RMR	.058	.00≤RMR≤.10	Basak et al. (2013)	Accepted
3	GFI	.911	.90≤GFI≤.95	Basak et al. (2013)	Accepted
4	AGFI	.876	.85≤AGFI≤.90	Basak et al. (2013)	Accepted
5	NFI	.931	.90≤NFI≤.95	Basak et al. (2013)	Accepted
6	CFI	.955	.90≤CFI≤.95	Basak et al. (2013)	Accepted
7	SRMR	.052	>0.05 &<0.08	Hair et al. (2010)	Accepted
8	RMSEA	.069	.05≤RMSEA≤.08	Hair et al. (2010)	Accepted

Cronbach Alpha

Cronbach alpha is an appropriate technique for estimating internal reliability when the scoring is polytomous (Linn, 2008). Cronbach alpha is above .75 for all the components and overall FST. The alpha values are acceptable as Karagoz (2019) recommends a minimum level of .70 for the Cronbach alpha. The following table presents factor-wise and overall Cronbach alpha.

Table 5
Cronbach's alpha of the scale

Sr. No.	Components	No. of Items	Alpha	Judgment
1	Competence	5	.91	Accepted
2	Courage	4	.88	Accepted
3	Commitment	4	.86	Accepted
4	Self-Management	3	.81	Accepted
	Overall FST	16	.88	Accepted

Judgment Criteria

Table 6 presents the judgment criteria as per Kelley's followership model and considering logically that what type of teachers should be appointed. Exemplary and conformist followers are considered in the recommended category as they are top scorers on the scale. However, pragmatic style is not fully recommended but in the context of Pakistani education, where teachers are reluctant to choose the teaching profession and there is already a lack of teachers, therefore, there is a need to retain those teachers or appoint those teachers that are at least pragmatic followers. But, they should be trained properly to shift their status to a conformist or exemplary level. Passive and alienated followers are not recommended because they not only create hurdles for the school leaders but also perform poorly in the classroom. The fewer passive and alienated followers in an organization, the more the leadership success occurs as highlighted by the researchers such as Kelley (2008).

Table 6
Judgment criteria

Range of obtained scores	Rank	Nomination as per Kelley's followership theory (1992)	Judgment to appoint as a teacher
67-80	Highest	Exemplary	Highly recommended
54-66	High	Conformist	Recommended
42-54	Moderate	Pragmatic	Manageable but needs training
30-41	Low	Passive	Not recommended
Below 30	Lowest	Alienated	Not Recommended

DISCUSSION

The research aims to develop a scale for assessing followership among school teachers. Followership is least addressed in the research studies due to researchers' more focus on leadership in organizations particularly in educational institutions. However, no one can assume that without effective followers, effective leadership can exist. Therefore, along with leadership, the significance of followers is extremely worthwhile. In this regard, Chaleff (2016) also theorized the importance collaborative role of followers with their leaders for the achievement of institutional goals. When we talk about followership in schools, it seems somewhat different than other organizations because teachers are the most highly qualified followers of their leaders. They have to perform many duties independently instead of just passively obeying the school leader. As Kelley (1992) states that effective followers never remain bound to the instruction of leaders, but they do the effort for organizational purposes. As Dixon and Westbrook (2003) highlight that a crucial aspect of organizational success is the development of social contracts through leader-follower relationships followership questionnaire was first developed by Kelley (1992) and is being used in some latest researches such as it is used by Blanchard et al. (2009), Oyertunji (2013), Gatti et al. (2017), and Hinić et al. (2017). But, its validity and reliability are still questionable because of lacking unidimensionality that is basic to construct validation procedures using advanced estimation procedures such as factor analysis in AMOS. Therefore, the FST is developed through this effort that fulfills the psychometric assumptions. The researcher followed that standardized procedures for FST development, such as the researcher made double items than desired as per the suggestion of Linn (2008) and remaining items on each factor in FST are three or above as suggested by Kline (2005). Following Lawshe's content validity estimation procedure, the estimated CVR and CVI are found acceptable. The scale confirms the four essential characteristics as Kelley theorized in 1992 and its evidence is illustrated in scree plot and parallel analysis as per recommendations of Kline (2013). Moreover, all the items in the scale show a 0.40 or above loading i.e. acceptable because it is the minimum criteria to retain an item according to Kline (2013). Model fit estimates such as CFI, RMSEA, SRMR are in the recommended range of different experts, such as McDonald & Hu (2002), Hair et al., (2010), and Basak et al., (2013). The final scale also shows an excellent overall and factor-wise Cronbach alpha value i.e. above 0.80 (Karagoz, 2016). Judgment criteria show the range of scores and the nomination of followership styles according to the theory of Kelley (1992).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The model fit indices established through expert opinion and statistical procedures of EFA, CFA particularly proved the existence of reasonable content and construct validity evidence in the scale. The scale also fulfills all the other required psychometric evidence, such as reliable evidence and the number of items to measure construct. Moreover, interpretation criteria based on the well-renowned followership theory of Kelley (1992) are provided. However, the scale has a limitation of establishing a unidimensional instrument as per the assumption of Kellerman's (2008) followership theory instead of following Kelley's claim that effective followership is based on two dimensions. However, to prove the model under the umbrella of effective followership, unidimensionality seems a compulsory principle. Finally, the FST is ready and available to the researchers for use for the teachers internationally. However, to adapt to the scale, future researchers are suggested to re-establish the psychometric evidence by administering the scale in a different context because Kelley (1992) claims that the followership characteristics may vary by variation of organization and culture.

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